

# Transportation:

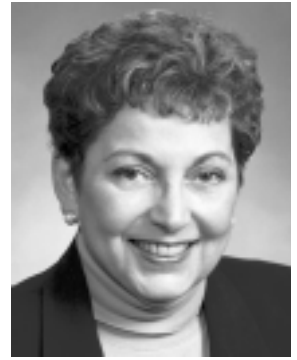
## *What's the answer?*

From Reps. Fred Jarrett  
and Ida Ballasiotes

41<sup>st</sup> District



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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Lawmakers spent much of last session working to create a new transportation revenue plan that would provide funding for \$10 billion in new projects to relieve traffic congestion, improve economic opportunities and make highways safer. Unfortunately, an agreement on a funding plan could not be reached.

Since the session ended, we have continued working with our colleagues, both Republican and Democrat, to find workable solutions which will help bring an end to the gridlock on our roadways. Frankly, our economy depends on it now more than ever. We simply cannot afford to discuss this issue any longer. The seemingly never-ending transportation studies must come to an end and we must move forward with a new revenue package.

We both have received a tremendous amount of mail, e-mail and phone calls from 41st District residents with a variety of questions on our transportation system. Hopefully, this newsletter can answer some of those questions and help you understand where current transportation revenues come from and what those revenues pay for.

We take seriously our job of ensuring the public receives accurate information. Please take a few minutes to review the list we compiled of your most frequently asked questions. Should you have questions or comments, we invite you to call, e-mail or write us.

Thank you for allowing us the privilege of serving you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Fred Jarrett".

Fred Jarrett

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Ida Ballasiotes".

Ida Ballasiotes

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# TRANSPORTATION: Frequently Asked Questions



## How much do we spend on transportation?

The state plans to spend \$2.7 billion in the current biennium. Almost all of this goes to roads (\$2.0 billion) or ferries (\$0.5 billion).

## How much is the state gas tax?

23 cents per gallon for both motor fuel and diesel.

## Where does Washington's 23-cent gas tax rank among the 50 states?

23<sup>rd</sup> of 50 states.

## How much revenue does 1 cent of state gas tax raise?

\$32.1 million per year.

## How much of the state gas tax do counties and cities receive back?

Counties receive 19 percent of the state's 23-cent gas tax. Cities receive 10 percent of the state gas tax. In addition, cities and counties receive grants through state agencies (Transportation Improvement Board, County Road Administrative Board) that are funded with gas tax dollars. In total, local government receives 11 of the 23 cents, and the state 12 cents.

## How much is the federal gas tax?

18 cents per gallon of motor fuel, and 24 cents per gallon of diesel fuel.

## How much of the gas tax goes to transportation?

Since 1944, it has been unconstitutional for gas tax revenues to go to anything but transportation. In fact, the state Constitution even limits the *kinds* of transportation the gas tax can fund to roads and auto ferries.

## How much of our current gas tax goes to pay off bonds?

Approximately 4.2 cents, or 18 percent of the state gas tax, services bonds used to construct roads we've already built. However, after taking into account distributions to other state and local programs, this amount represents 31 percent of remaining state gas tax revenues.

## How much of the federal gas tax does our state get back from the federal government?

Under the most recent federal transportation act (TEA-21), Washington has received back 97 percent of the federal gas taxes collected in this state. Over the past 50 years, the state has received approximately 145 percent as a result of interstate construction.

## How many new miles of state roadways have been constructed during the past five years?

207 new highway lane miles, 57 HOV lane miles and 28 interchanges. In the last biennium \$1.4 billion was spent to preserve and improve our highways and another \$1.4 billion is planned for the next biennium.